

Message Text

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67

ACTION NEA-10

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R 091226Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3918

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2002

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRAS 0250 SENT ACTION NEW

DELHI INFO

BOMBAY/CALCUTTA/COLOMBO 9 FEB 76.

QUOTE:

C O F F I D E N T I A L MADRAS 250

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: ARRESTS AND COERCION CONTINUING

1. ACCORDING TO OUR POLICE SOURCES, TOTAL ARRESTS STOOD AT MORE THAN 13,000 AS OF SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 8. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS REPRESENTS A NEW SUBSTANTIAL WAVE OF ARRESTS OVER THE WEEKEND OR LATE RETURNS COMING IN FROM THE DISTRICTS ON ARRESTS WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE COURSE OF LAST WEEK. IN EITHER CASE THE ADDITIONAL FIGURES SEEM TO REPRESENT ARRESTS IN THE DISTRICTS RATHER THAN IN MADRAS CITY. OUR SOURCES INDICATE THAT 285 RSS MEMBERS HAVE NOW BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, MOSTLY OVER THE WEEKEND, AND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN REMOVED TO JAILS IN ANDHRA PRADESH. MORE ARRESTS ARE EXPECTED IN ANTICIPATION OF MRS. GANDHI'S FEBRUARY 13-15 VISIT.

2. THE DMK NEWSPAPER MURASOLI CONTINUES ON FEBRUARY 9 TO CARRY 60 NEW NAMES OF ARRESTED DMK MEMBERS, BRINGING THE 95- LISTED BY MURASOLI TO 172. A POLICE SOURCE CONFIRMS THAT ALL OF THE NAMES LISTED ARE ACCURATE.

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3. A POLICE SOURCE TELLS US THERE IS AN INTELLIGENCE BUREAU PROPOSAL TO PUT RESTRICTIONS ON THE MOVEMENTS OF FORMER CHIEF MINISTER KARUNANIDHI AND TO SHIFT HIM OUTSIDE OF TAMIL NADU. SOURCE'S DECISION ON THIS WILL BE TAKEN DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT.

4. WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING REPORTS FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, INCLUDING SOME JAIL AND CONGRESS PARTY CONTACTS, THAT SEVERAL OF THE DMK PRISONERS HAVE BEEN BEATEN BY JAIL WARDERS, UNDER ORDERS, USING BATONS, BELTS, AND CANES. AMONG THE MORE IMPORTANT OF THOSE REPORTEDLY SUBJECTED TO SUCH TREATMENT ARE KARUNANIDHI'S SON, STALIN; HIS SON-IN-LAW, MURASOLI MARAN, MP; DMK RAJYA SABHA LEADER S.S. MARIASWAMY, MP; AND ARCOT VEERASWAMY, MLA.

5. WE ARE RELIABLY INFORMED THAT THE GOI HAS ORDERED THE IMPOUNDING UNDER MISA OF PASSPORTS OF SOME 400 MEMBERS OF OPPOSITION PARTIES AND OTHERS ON A "BLACKLIST." THE ONLY SPECIFIC NAMES REPORTED BY THE SOURCE WERE EX-LOK SABHA SPEAKER N. SANJEEVA REDDY AND LOCAL BLD LEADER DR. M. SANTHOSHAM. SOURCE SAID NO FORMER DMK MIFZISTERUPARE ON THE LIST SO FAR.

6. THE PRESS CONTINUES TO REPORT DEFECTIONS FROM THE DMK, INCLUDING SEVERAL PANCHAYAT OFFICIALS. (IN MADRAS 0209 WE REPORTED POLICE THREATS AGAINST SUCH OFFICIALS TO FORCE THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM DMK). THE ONLY DEFECTION OF NOTE OVER THE WEEKEND WAS THAT OF E.R. KRISHNAN, MP, WHO WAS ARRESTED LAST WEEK.

7. THIS MORNING'S MURASOLI CARRIES ANOTHER LETTER FROM KARUNANIDHI IN WHICH HE ASKS DMK MEMBERS TO BE CALM AND PEACEFUL AND TELLS THEM THAT "VIOLENCE IS A DOUBLE-EDGED WEAPON WHICH WILL ATTACK THE USER UNTIMATELY." NOTING A SUSTAINED CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT HIM AND THE PARTY, HE ASKS HIS FOLLOWERS NOT TO RETALIATE EVEN IF VIOLENCE IS USED AGAINST THEM AND SAYS THAT THE DEFINITION OF COURAGE TO BE PEACEFUL AND CALM DURING A CRISIS.

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UNQUOTE.
SAXBE

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